CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 1 JUNE 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT MADE BY THE FOREIGN SECRETARY ON 30 MAY 1998 FOLLOWING PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR TEST THAT DAY

Pakistan's Foreign Secretary made a statement on 30 May 1998 following Pakistan's nuclear test that day. I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the statement which may kindly be circulated as an official document of the Conference.

(Signed) Munir Akram
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Foreign Secretary's statement on 30 May 1998

After successfully conducting five nuclear tests on 28 May 1998, Pakistan completed the current series by another nuclear test today. Let me clarify here that there was only one test conducted today.

All the tests conducted were fully contained. There was no release of radio-activity. The results were as expected.

The devices tested correspond to weapons configuration, compatible with delivery systems.

The Prime Minister has congratulated the Pakistani scientists, engineers and technicians on their mastering of complex and advanced technologies, through dedicated team work.

I know you are very keen and perhaps a little impatient to throw all your questions at me. But before I open the floor I think it will be useful for all of us present here, including friends who have travelled from far and wide, to see this whole question on nuclearization of South Asia in its political, indeed I dare say, its philosophical perspective.

To our friends in the Western world the nuclear question is uni-dimensional. Their undivided focus has been and

remains on non-proliferation as a concept. Only the philosophy of the concept as adopted to their own intent and purpose appeals to them. The all important underlying causes are conveniently ignored.

I would for a moment like to ask you to reflect on the obverse i.e. proliferation in South Asia. India initiated its nuclear programme right after independence and detonated a device in, as early as, 1974. New Delhi then feverishly engaged in a massive nuclear and missile programme to satisfy its grandiose ambitions and hegemonistic designs. Their track record at that point showed aggression against China, wars against Pakistan and a patently illegal occupation of Kashmir accompanied by total denial of the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir as enshrined in Security Council resolutions.

The fact of our existence as the neighbour of an expansionist and a hegemonistic power taught us the inevitable lesson that we must search for security. Contemporary history held only one lesson for us. The answer lay in credible deterrence. Today we have proved our credibility. There are no doubts left any more.

The era of ambiguity is behind us. But may I say to you, that the problem stays.

The high priests of non-proliferation do not scratch below the surface. The symptom is their problem. The disease afflicts us. A whole vast field of the non-proliferation

regime has been built up. The desire is to confine everybody within its four walls. But the real causes of insecurity, conflicts and tensions need to be addressed. It is, therefore, imperative to find a peaceful and just solution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

Condemnations and sanctions are expressions of the injured ego of the powers who arrogate to themselves the high responsibility of keeping the peace and the means to ensure peace, in their part of the world. For the rest of the world their interest does not go beyond their own pre-occupation with non-proliferation. They would leave the critical questions surrounding peace and security here to the narrow confines of the "bilateral context". They know very well that is a dark tunnel where sounds reverberate but do not lead to light at the end of the tunnel.

Genuine contribution to peace and security can be made by constructive engagement in the search for permanent solutions. The councils of the world should not be convened to heap more criticism for that will evidently be fruitless but to devise ways and means to address the real issues.

Our decision to exercise the nuclear option was an expression of self-defence.

In restoring this strategic balance, Pakistan has given only a bare minimum response.

It is not our intention to enter into an arms race. The

history of the Cold War era shows that such disastrous races are counter-productive and definitely not sustainable. The only race we propose to run is for economic development.

Over one billion peoples of our region do not want and certainly cannot afford to divert their precious resources for a nuclear confrontation in South Asia.

We are determined to seek ways and means to cool the temperature and to lower the tensions.

Pakistan has always exercised maximum restraint. We will continue to do so. Our capabilities demonstrated by our six nuclear tests are only for self-defence and only to deter aggression. This has been clearly stated by the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister has also affirmed Pakistan's determination to engage in a constructive dialogue with other countries especially major powers to determine new ways and means to promote the goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the world.

The Prime Minister has also reaffirmed the Government's determination to resume Pakistan-India dialogue to address all outstanding issues including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir as well as peace and security.

We are prepared to enter into discussions with India for talking all steps that are necessary to ensure mutual

restraint and equitable measures for nuclear stabilization in our region.

We have already stated at the highest level that Pakistan has not and will not transfer sensitive technologies to other states or entities.

The nuclearization of South Asia poses new challenges for global non-proliferation. The history of this region tells that non-proliferation cannot be ensured in a security void. Compelling security concerns have to be discussed together with measures to promote the goals of non-proliferation. Global non-proliferation regimes can best be promoted by addressing the very factors that impel proliferation.

The new global security order cannot be predicated in trying to freeze the iniquities and ignore injustices.

As a responsible country whose record of restraint and responsibility is impeccable, Pakistan today assures the international community and in particular India of our willingness to enter into immediate discussions to address all matters of peace and security including urgent measures to prevent the dangers of nuclear conflagration.

This sums up the true perspective of the issue that you are so keen to discuss with me today.